

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

Docket No. 6860

Petitions of Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc.)
(VELCO), Vermont Transco LLC, Green Mountain)
Power Corporation (GMP), and Central Vermont Public)
Service Corporation for a certificate of public good,)
pursuant to 30 V.S.A. Section 248, authorizing VELCO)
to construct the so-called Northwest Vermont Reliability)
Project, said project to include: (1) upgrades at 12)
existing VELCO and GMP substations located in)
Charlotte, Essex, Hartford, New Haven, North)
Ferrisburgh, Poultney, Shelburne, South Burlington,)
Vergennes, West Rutland, Williamstown, and Williston,)
Vermont; (2) the construction of a new 345 kV)
transmission line from West Rutland to New Haven; (3))
the reconstruction of a portion of a 34.5 kV and 46 kV)
transmission line from New Haven to South Burlington;)
and (4) the reconductoring of a 115 kV transmission line)
from Williamstown to Barre, Vermont –)

Order entered: 6/22/2007

ORDER RE REVISED CHARLOTTE SUBSTATION DESIGN PLANS

On March 28, 2007, the Public Service Board ("Board") issued an Order requiring Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. and Vermont Transco, LLC (collectively "VELCO") to place the 115 kV transmission line underground in the Ferry Road area. On May 25, 2007, VELCO filed revised design plans for the Charlotte substation reflecting the changes needed to accommodate the underground placement of the 115 kV line. VELCO's May 25 filing additionally requests that the Board waive the four-week comment period for environmental permits.

On June 4, 2007, the Department filed a letter stating that it does not object to VELCO's request to waive the four-week comment period for environmental permits but states that, because the Town of Charlotte has concerns, the Board should allow a two-week review period.

On June 5, 2007, the Town of Charlotte ("Charlotte") filed a letter objecting to VELCO's request to waive the four-week comment period.

After consideration of the parties's comments, we hereby reduce the comment period for environmental permits from four weeks to two weeks.

Charlotte's June 5 letter provides several substantive comments regarding the May 25 design plans. In particular, Charlotte contends that the design plans are not clear with respect to the removal of the current 34.5 kV line and whether selective clearing would occur to the east and north of the substation. Further, Charlotte requests that additional plantings be added to the berm and to screen the view of the substation from Ferry Road; Charlotte also contends that additional plantings may be required depending on how much vegetation is removed to the north of the substation. Finally, Charlotte states that the VELCO plans "contain insufficient information regarding the use and restoration of the existing GMP [Green Mountain Power Corporation] substation site."

Charlotte proposes additional planting in the vicinity of the substation. As we have done in past orders, we are maintaining jurisdiction to determine, post-construction, whether the plantings shown in the May 25 filing are sufficient. At this time it is unclear whether additional plantings are warranted, but Charlotte will have the opportunity to review this issue after construction is complete and the vegetative screening is installed.

Charlotte cites to two instances where the May 25 design plans are unclear. First, Charlotte contends that the design plans are unclear regarding the removal of the existing 34.5 kV line. The existing 34.5 kV line will be removed after completion of the substation; there has not been any dispute regarding this issue. Second, Charlotte states that the May 25 plans do not show whether selective clearing would occur north and east of the substation. Charlotte has not provided any citations to evidence indicating that selective clearing is necessary for these areas. However, we remain concerned regarding the potential impact of any clearing on adjoining landowners. We require VELCO to work with Charlotte and the Department to determine whether selective clearing is appropriate in this area.

Finally, Charlotte also raised the issue of the use and restoration of the GMP substation. We require GMP to file a plan for disposition of the substation.

In our April 30, 2007, Order approving the Shelburne and Williston substations we addressed and established conditions related to issues of construction, night-time maintenance, and post-construction noise. The findings and discussion in the April 30 Order related to these issues were not specific to the Shelburne and Williston substations but instead applied generally to the substations being constructed along the 115 kV line.¹ For the reasons set forth in the April 30 Order, we impose similar conditions here related to construction practices and post-construction noise measurements.

Based upon our review of the design plans and the comments received, we approve the May 25 design plans with the following conditions:

1. Within 30 days of the completion of construction of the Charlotte substation, including all landscaping and aesthetic mitigation, VELCO shall notify the Board of the completion of construction. The Board will schedule a post-construction site visit and may require additional aesthetic mitigation if determined to be necessary.
2. VELCO must obtain all necessary permits and approvals prior to site preparation for and construction of the Charlotte substation. Parties will have two weeks from the date of any permits issued to file comments on those permits.
3. Within 30 days of the completion of construction of the Charlotte substation, including all landscaping and mitigation, VELCO shall file a plan, to be approved by the Board, for conducting a post-construction noise study.
4. VELCO must file, within two months of the date of this Order, a proposal for controlling noise during substation construction. Special attention should be made to noise generated during non-typical construction hours (4:00 p.m. - end; weekends). Parties will have two weeks to file comments on VELCO's proposal.
5. GMP must file a proposed plan for the disposition of its existing substation near Ferry Road.

SO ORDERED.

1. Most parties likewise addressed these issues on a generic, rather than site-specific basis (*e.g.*, VELCO November 3, 2006, Brief).

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 22nd day of June, 2007.

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)	PUBLIC SERVICE
)	
<u>s/ David C. Coen</u>)	BOARD
)	
)	OF VERMONT
<u>s/ John D. Burke</u>)	

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

FILED: June 22, 2007

ATTEST: s/ Susan M. Hudson
Clerk of the Board

NOTICE TO READERS: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Board (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: psb.clerk@state.vt.us)